

# Survey of Non-Traditional Forensic Service Providers

Dr. Tom S. Witt  
Director

Bureau of Business and Economic Research  
West Virginia University

# Survey of Forensic Identification Professionals

- Survey instrument modeled after the 2005 Census of Publicly Funded Forensic Crime Labs conducted by the BJS
- Survey instrument developed in collaboration with IAI
- Survey sent to 5,353 IAI U.S. members in April 2007
- Issues covered
  - Organization
  - Budget
  - Workload
  - Outsourcing
  - Quality Assurance

# Local Jurisdictions Account for Half of Units

Jurisdiction	
City, Borough, Village, or Town	50%
County	29%
State	9%
Federal/National	5%
Private	2%
Other	5%

# ...Most Are Small Units

Employment		
Size of Responding Unit	Full-Time and Part-Time	FTE
1 - 5 Employees	47%	50%
6 - 10 Employees	19%	19%
11-20 Employees	17%	16%
21 - 50 Employees	11%	10%
51 - 100 Employees	4%	3%
Over 100 Employees	2%	2%

# One-Third of Units Have Both Sworn and Civilian Employees

## Sworn or Civilian Units

100% Sworn Employees	24%
100% Civilian Employees	43%
Both Sworn and Civilian Employees	33%

# Types of Forensic Functions Performed in Units

## Forensic Functions Performed

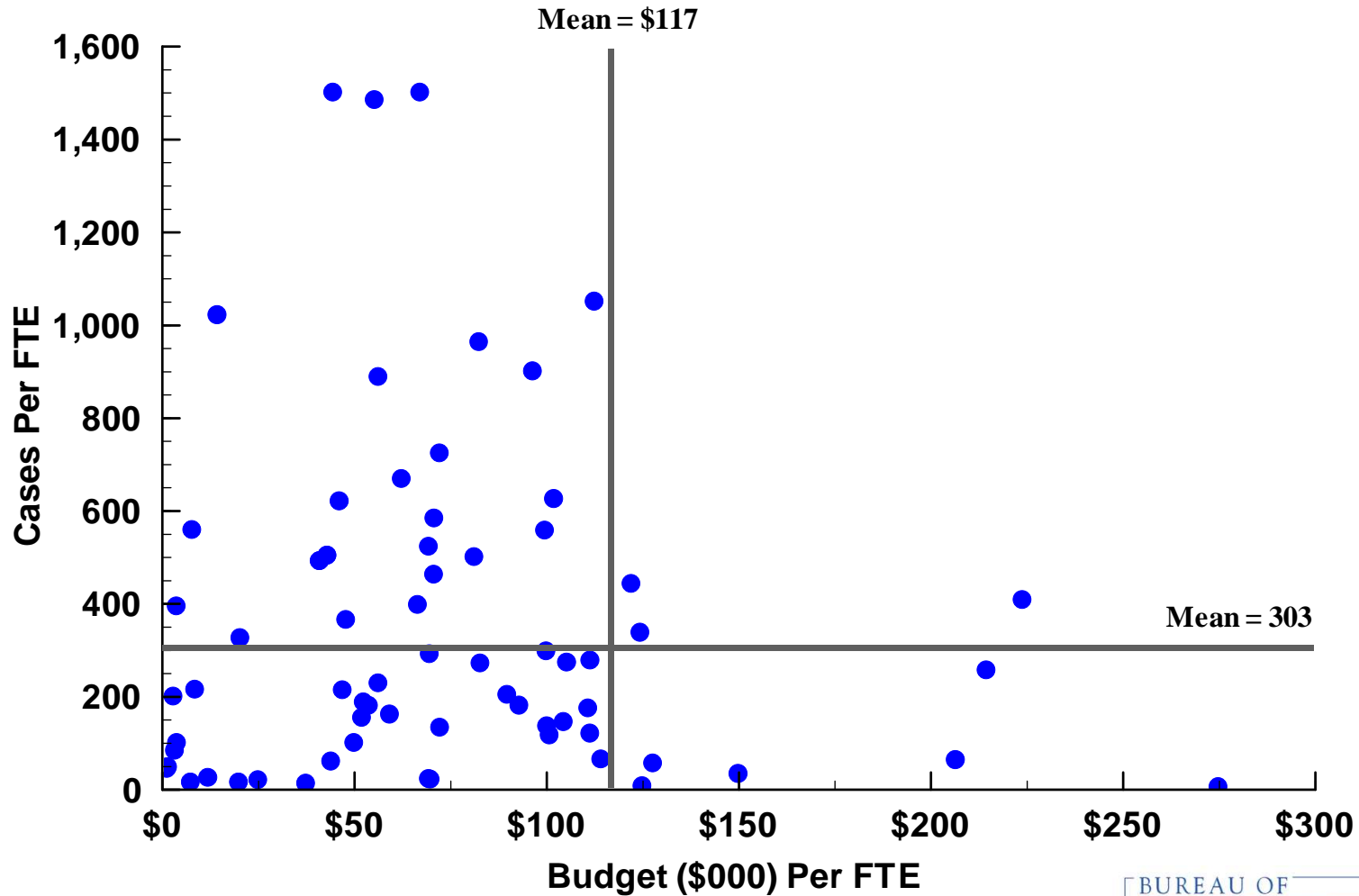
Crime Scene	78%	Footwear & Tire Track	30%
Latent Print	75%	Firearms	18%
Photography	73%	Forensic Art	13%
Tenprint	67%	Questioned Documents	13%
Bloodstain	41%	Polygraph	7%
Digital Evidence	33%	Odontology	2%

# Budgets Among Units Vary Widely

Jurisdiction	Median Total Budget	Percent of Total Budget		
		Personnel and Fringe	Equipment and Supplies	Other
City, Borough, Village, or Town	\$168,850	88%	7%	5%
County	\$387,413	62%	23%	15%

# Caseload and Budget Per FTE

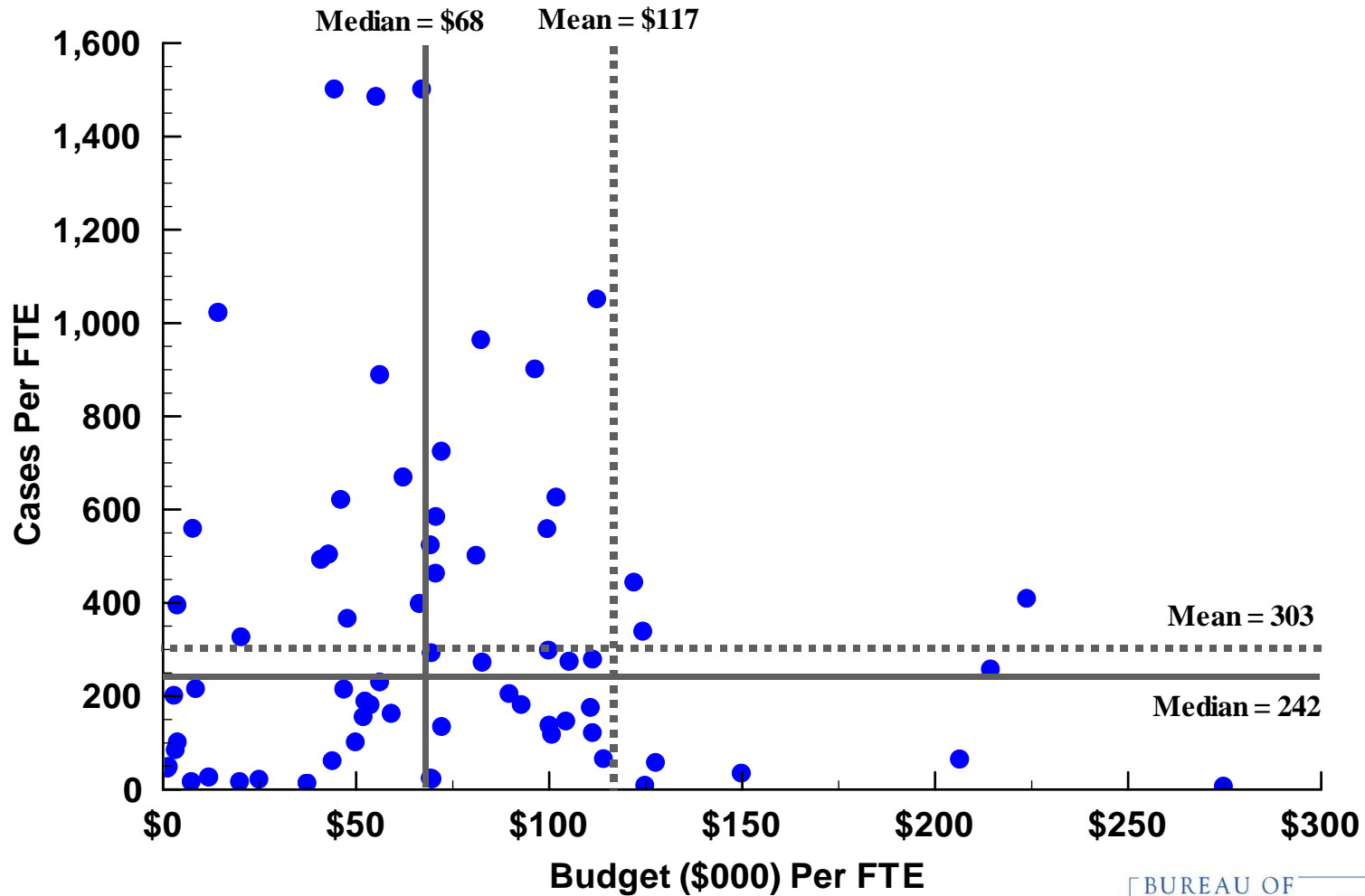
(Responding Units Providing Complete Data)





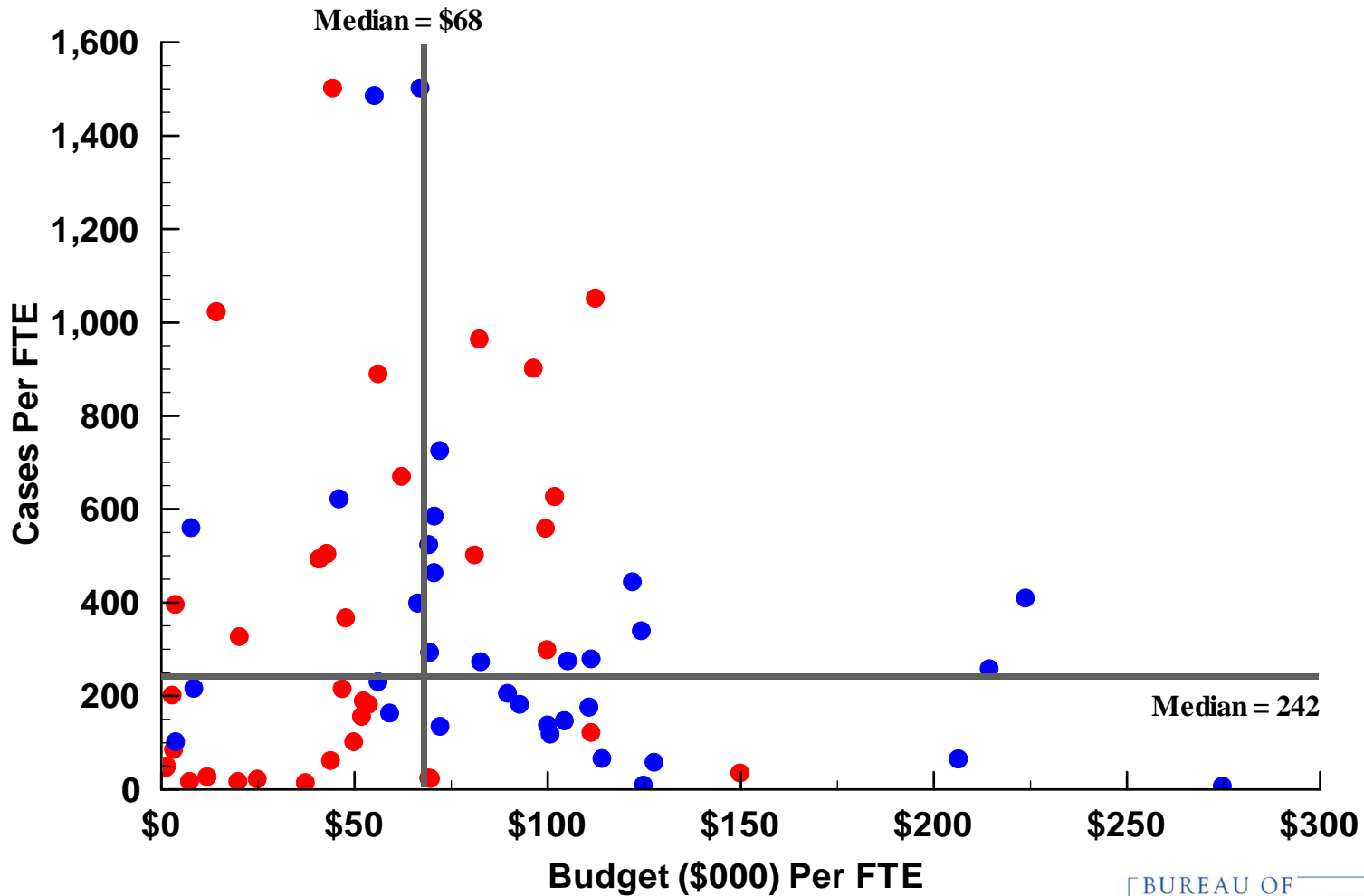
# Caseload and Budget Per FTE

(Responding Units Providing Complete Data)



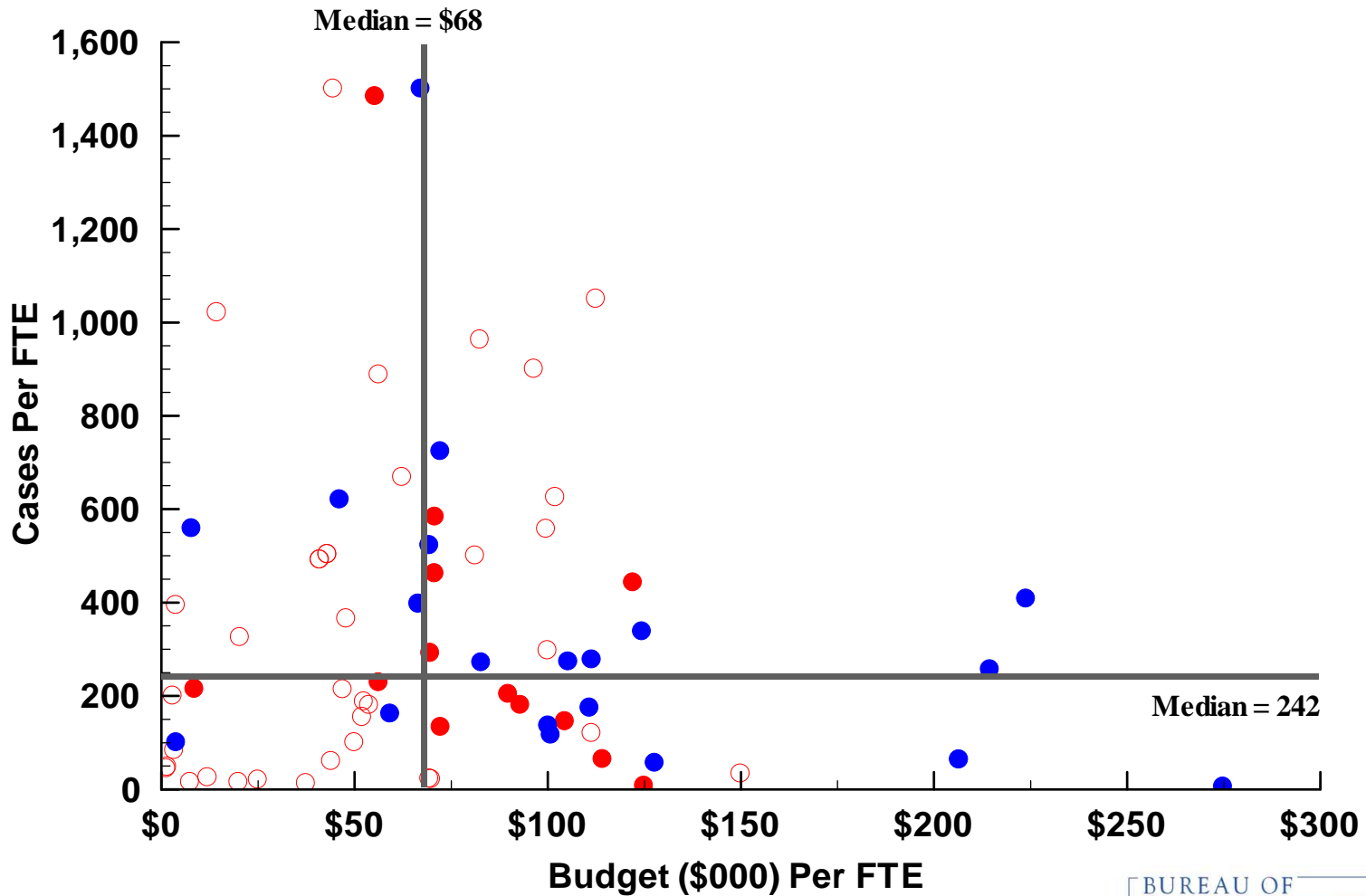
# Caseload and Budget Per FTE

(1 – 5 Employees)



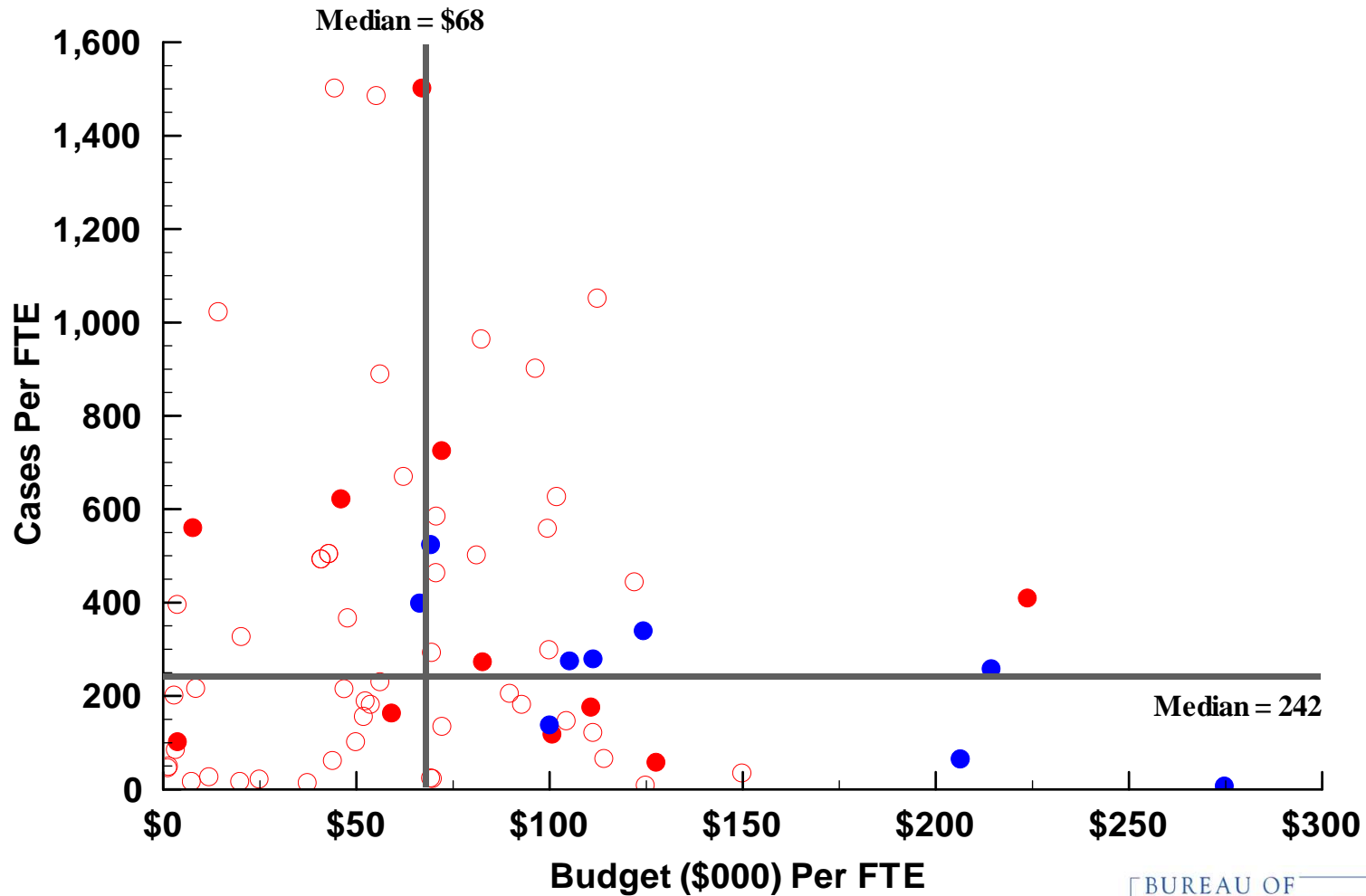
# Caseload and Budget Per FTE

(6 – 10 Employees)



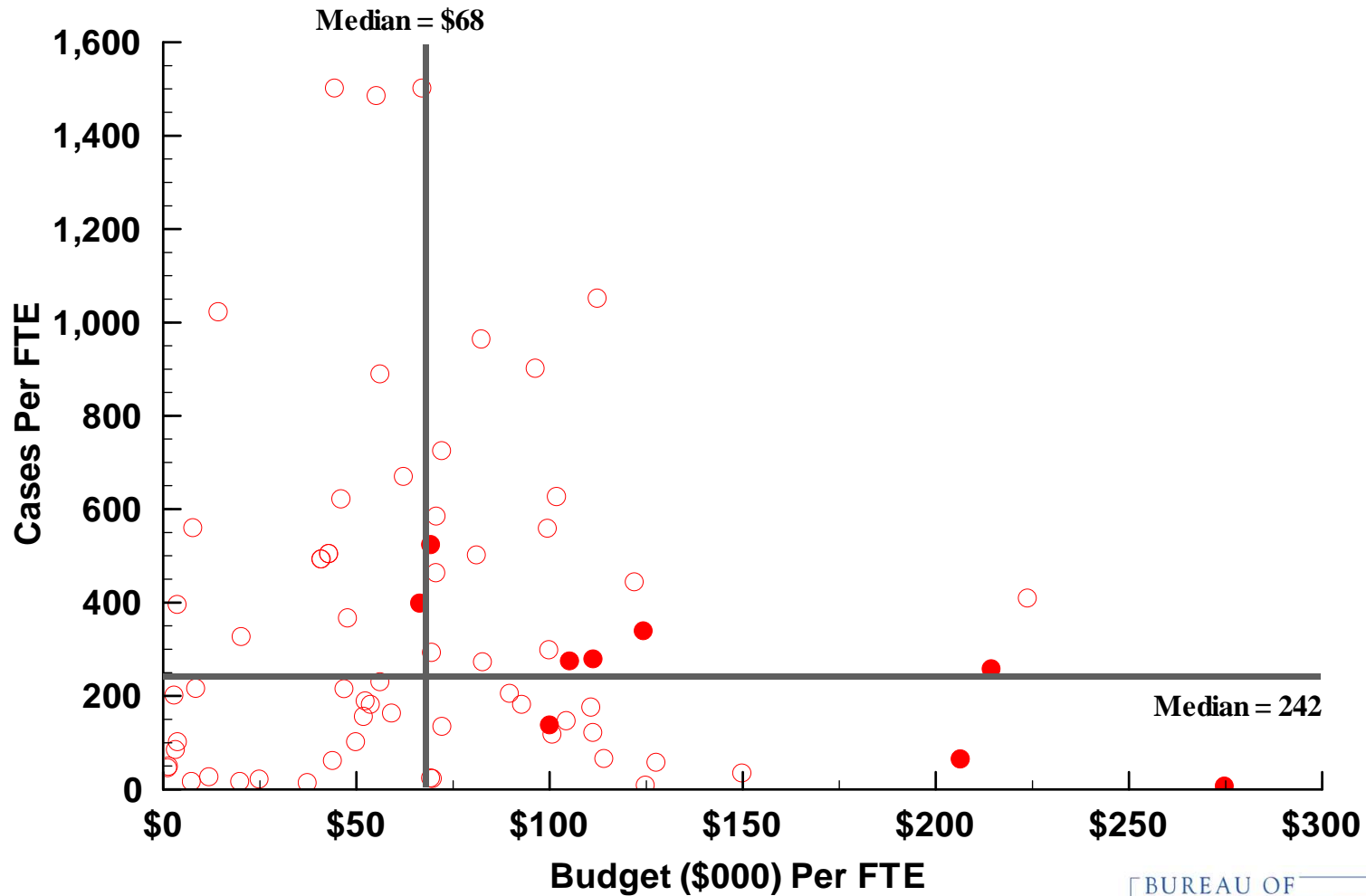
# Caseload and Budget Per FTE

(11 – 20 Employees)



# Caseload and Budget Per FTE

(21 + Employees)



# Cases and Backlog

- Mean cases received at responding units is 2,780 annually
- Mean backlog is 9.4% of annual caseload
  - Equivalent to 5 weeks
  - A **backlogged case** is a case that remains unreported for a period of 30 days or more
  - Mean backlog for latent prints is 12.3%

# Outsourcing

- 53% of responding units outsource
- Most frequent requests outsourced
  - Firearms
  - Latent Print
  - Footwear
- 16% outsource peer review (verification)

# Quality Assurance

- 15% are accredited
- 34% are considering accreditation
- 69% have system to verify results
- 40% have LIMS or other system